CLAIMS

1.   A method for discovering the topology of a network comprising:

initially resolving the positions of the end stations, and subsequently resolving the topology of the remaining devices.

2.   A method as claimed in claim 1 in which the step of initially resolving the positions of the end stations comprises, for each managed device, determining which ports are only connected to an end station.

3.   A method as claimed in claim 1 in which the step of resolving the topology of the remaining devices comprises:

querying for each managed device, which ports have learnt the address of another managed device.

4.   A computer program on a computer readable medium loadable into a digital computer or embodied in a carrier wave, said program including software for carrying out the method of claim 1.

5.   A computer program on a computer readable medium loadable into a digital computer or embodied in a carrier wave, for discovering the topology of a network comprising:

a program step to query a port of a managed device for a first address of any packet which has been received;

a program step for querying the same port of the device for a second address of any packet which has been received;

if there is no second address, returning relevant data to a manager and determining if there is another port on the device;

if there is a second address, determining if there is another port on the device;

if there is another port on the device, repeating the preceding four steps for another port of the managed device;

if not, repeating the preceding five steps in respect of another managed device.